Steps for Using Informal Purchasing Procedures

When it is determined that informal purchasing procedures are to be used, the following requirements should be met:

- 1. Specifications need to be written for the products to be purchased.
- 2. Notify prospective vendors of the intent to purchase the foods, supplies or equipment.
- 3. Provide at least three distributors with product specifications, the period of time the bid price must be honored (week, month, semester, etc.), general purchasing conditions and any other information needed for the bidder to properly respond. You may wish to provide estimated quantities to be purchased in order to get the best pricing.
- 4. Obtain price quotations from the Bid Department of the Distributor.
- 5. The price quotes may be obtained in person, by telephone or in writing using a price quote worksheet.
- 6. Price quotes may be mailed, e-mailed or faxed.
- 7. Document the prices quoted.
- 8. Award the bid to the vendor with the lowest price for the quality specified. If the lowest price is not awarded, document reasons for selecting a higher price. Any and all bids may be rejected if there are sound documented reasons.
- 9. Monitor invoices to insure that bid prices and products bid are being honored
- 10. Suspension, debarment and noncollusion certification required. The SFA can check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) to verify that the distributor is not excluded from bidding. The EPLS is currently located at http://www.epls.gov. The documentation should be kept on file at the school food authority.